Words of Wisdom from 10 Powerful Female In-house Counsel

Career Development

Women have made significant strides in the workforce, but there's still a lot to be done in order to achieve gender parity. According to the ACC Chief Legal Officers 2018 Survey, 37 percent of the respondents were women, indicating that there's still a barrier that women face in attaining C-suite

positions. And of those participating female CLOs, 48 percent reported making under US$200,000, compared with only 39 percent of male participants.

At ACC, we have found that women achieve more when working together. To that end, we compiled quotes from some of the outstanding women we profiled over the past year. From getting out of your comfort zone to securing a seat at the table, here's career advice that will help you advance in your profession.

1. Karen Roberts

Role: Executive Vice President and General Counsel
Company: Walmart Stores, Inc.
Words of wisdom: Build relationships.

> *"I have been the beneficiary of some phenomenal mentors and relationships that I have built internally and externally over the years. Relationship building — finding a mentor who can assist you and will truly be honest with you and provide you with candid feedback — is a gift."*

2. Gladys Chun

Role: General Counsel
Company: Lazada
Words of wisdom: Get out of your comfort zone.

> *"The future is to be the best in what we do. We should constantly challenge status quo and embrace changes. Break boundaries as fear inhibits you from creating something big."*

3. Marina Gracias

Role: General Counsel and Corporate Secretary
Company: Varo
Words of wisdom: Champion others' success.

> *"Across the company, whether it is in product, marketing, finance, or legal, Varo is lucky as we have a fair number of very talented women."*

4. Hui Chen

Role: Ethics and Compliance Consultant
Company: Independent [former compliance consultant for the US Department of Justice (DOJ)]
Words of wisdom: Know your priorities.

> *"I think striving to be ethical should be the goal. Being compliant is merely following orders. Striving to be ethical is trying to live your values and principles, and recognizing it will never be easy or perfect."*

5. Sarah Franklin

Role: Associate General Counsel – Safety & Environment
Company: Shell
Words of wisdom: Act fast.

> *“We learned from others that if we didn’t go after these things quickly, they wouldn’t happen.”*

6. Rose Marie Glazer

Role: Vice President, Deputy General Counsel, and Corporate Secretary
Company: American International Group (AIG)
Words of wisdom: Stand up for yourself.

> *“It’s important to continue, as women, to push back on that kind of stereotypical behavior, to challenge the status quo, but more importantly to mentor the new generation of lawyers.”*

7. Amenda Makhetha

Role: Group Data Privacy and Compliance Manager
Company: MiX Telematics
Words of wisdom: Stand up for others.

> *“If I felt someone was being shunned or was not speaking up for themselves, I’d be that person to stand up and speak on their behalf, I’ve always been a voice for others, even in my family.”*

8. Sahia Ahmad

Role: General Counsel
Company: Dubai Tourism
Words of wisdom: Be a role model.

> *"I’m a Muslim woman from the Middle East, I’m independent, and, fortunately, I’ve been successful. That’s the example I want to set for others."*

9. Rebecca Thompson

Role: General Counsel and Vice President of Human Resources
Company: Special Olympics Northern California and Nevada
Words of wisdom: Don’t regret taking time off to raise children.

> *“I focused on being the best private practice attorney I could be. Then I became a full-time mother, and focused on being the best full-time mother I could be. Then I became a general counsel and human resources specialist, and dedicated myself to being the best I could be at that.”*

10. Deborah Im

Role: Associate General, APAC
Company: Facebook
Words of wisdom: Value your work — and everyone else’s.

> *“There’s a poster at Facebook that says, ‘Nothing at Facebook is someone else’s problem,’ and that’s a value we all try to embrace.*

Do you know a hardworking, inspiring woman in the in-house counsel field? Tweet us (@ACCDocket) or email us so that she can be featured in *ACC Docket* or ACCDocket.com.

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